Welcome

to the

I Corp Chaplain

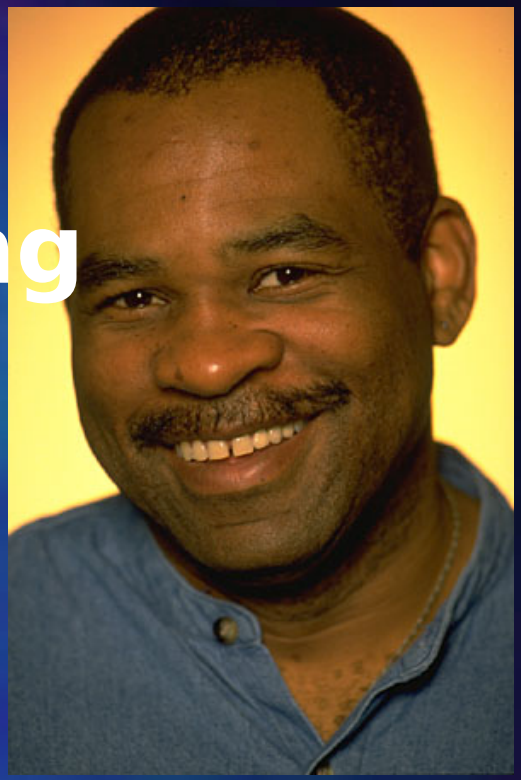
Suicide Awareness Brief

Prepared for you
by the
I Corp Unit Ministry Team

So. . .

Just when you thought you knew everything that you ever wanted to know about suicide awareness, it's time for anot !

But, this is a User Friendly Briefing



In the next few minutes we will present you with an overview of some of the things you need to be aware of about suicide.

Here's the Bottom Line Up Front

“THE ONLY THING THAT WILL SAVE A HUMAN LIFE IS A HUMAN RELATIONSHIP”

We Say
Again. . .

“THE ONLY THING THAT WILL SAVE A HUMAN LIFE IS A HUMAN RELATIONSHIP”

Are you willing to develop a relationship with someone to help prevent them from doing something foolish?

Just Remember this:

"SUICIDE IS PREVENTED BY ALTERING THE CONDITIONS AND TREATING THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM WHICH PRODUCED THE SUICIDAL THOUGHTS."

Here are 3 definitions that you should know.

1

Ideation

Is a serious suicidal thought or threat.

#2

Gesture

Is a deliberate act of self harm that is not fatal and in which death was not really the goal.

#3

Attempt

Is a clearly lethal act to take one's own life which would have been completed had not planned or chance intervention occurred.

Don't Think That Suicide Can't Happen on your Watch.

ARMY TIMES

4 December 2000

PFC Dies of Gunshot Wound in Kosovo

A soldier serving in Kosovo died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, Army officials said.

Why Would anyone want to commit suicide?

MOTIVATIONS FOR SUICIDE:

- to escape an intolerable situation
- to punish survivors
- to gain attention
- to manipulate others
- to join a deceased loved one

MOTIVATIONS FOR SUICIDE

- to avoid punishment or shame
- to avoid personal pain/suffering
- to seek martyrdom
- to express “eternal love”

Read these common myths about suicide.

MYTH

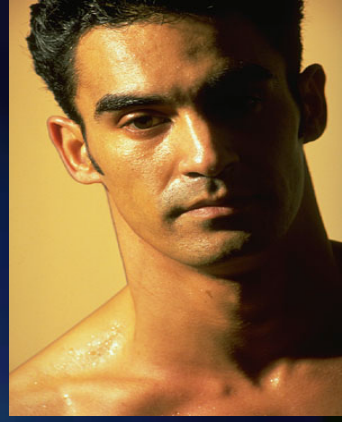
Talking about suicide will give a person the idea to do it.

FACT: Suicidal people already have the idea. Talking about the idea may encourage them to ask for help.

MYTH

People who talk about suicide don’t commit it.

FACT: 80% of those people who completed a suicide had given definite indications of their intention.

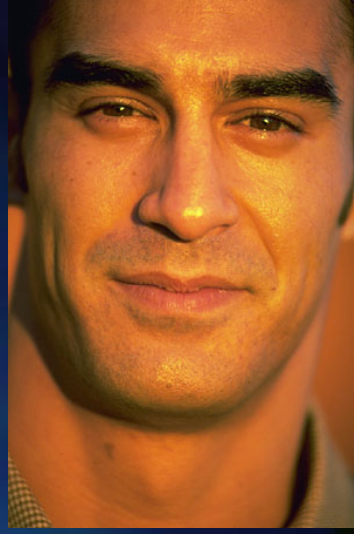


MYTH

All suicidal people are fully intent on dying. No one can stop them.

FACT: 95% are undecided about it. They signal for help before the attempt.

MYTH



Suicide is an impulsive act.

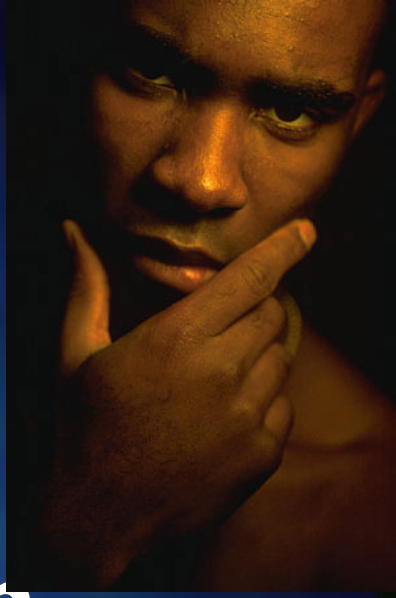
FACT: Most suicides are carefully planned and thought about for weeks.

MYTH

Suicidal people remain suicidal.

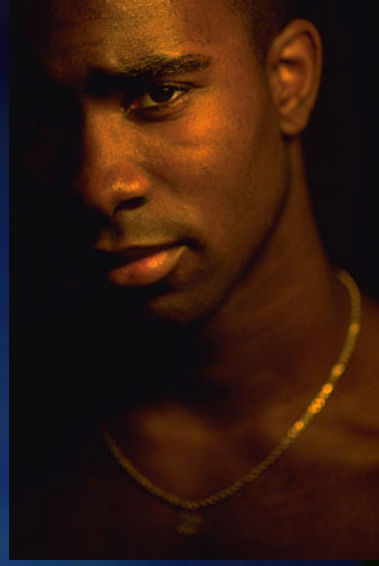
FACT: Most are suicidal for only a brief period. Timely intervention may save their lives.

MYTH



A person who attempts suicide will not try again.

FACT: Most people who attempt suicide have attempted to do so before.



MYTH

Suicidal persons are mentally ill.

FACT: Most suicidal persons are not mentally ill. Severe emotional distress is not the same as mental illness.

MYTH

December has the highest suicide rate.

FACT: December has one of the lowest rates. Spring months have the highest.

MYTH

It’s not suicide if there is no note.

FACT: Only one suicide in four leaves a note.

OTHER MYTHS

About Suicide:

- Suicide is a problem of a specific class of people.
- People who talk about suicide don’t commit suicide.
- Once a person is suicidal, they are suicidal forever.
- Suicide is inherited or runs in families.

OTHER MYTHS

About Suicide:

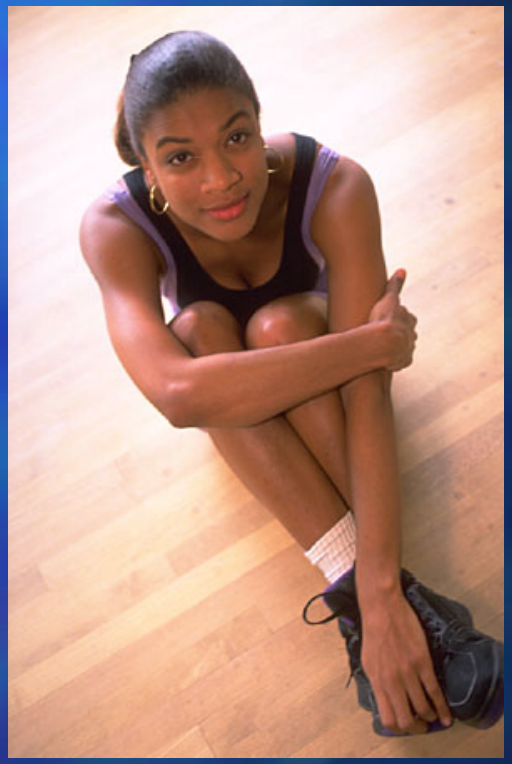
- If a person is religious, they will not commit suicide.
- Suicide and depression are the same.
- Improvement after a suicidal crisis means that the risk of committing suicide is over.

Did You Know?

Women attempt suicide more than men.

but

Men actually kill themselves more often!



Did You Know?

- 1/4 of all suicide victims are under 30 years old.
- 2/3 of those who attempt suicide are under 40 years old.

Did You Know?

- 8 out of 10 people who commit suicide have indicated to someone their intention to kill themselves.
- 1/4 of suicides have been seen by a medical doctor 7 days before their death.

FACT. . .

SUICIDAL PERSONS EXHIBIT WARNING SIGNALS

Are:

Feelings of:

HOPELESSNESS

HELPLESSNESS

WORTHLESSNESS

We Call this the:

HHW

Syndrome

INDICATORS of HHW:

- A PREOCCUPATION WITH DEATH OR THREATENING TO COMMIT SUICIDE
- A HISTORY OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS, GESTURES, THREATS, OR IDEATIONS.
- EXHIBITING SIGNIFICANT SIGNS OF DEPRESSION.
- A DRAMATIC DROP IN JOB PERFORMANCE

INDICATORS of HHW

- SEVERE PERSONALITY CHANGES
- MAKING FINAL ARRANGEMENTS
- EXPERIENCING A SIGNIFICANT LOSS
- EXHIBITING A HOPLESSNESS ABOUT LIFE

What Causes "HHW" Syndrome

- Worry About Job or School Performance
- Loss of Emotional Support System
- Loss of Social or Financial Status

What Causes "WWH" Syndrome

- Drug or alcohol Abuse
- Loss of Job
- Debt/ Low Income
- Downward Mobility and Shame: DUI, Arrest for Molestation of a Minor, etc.

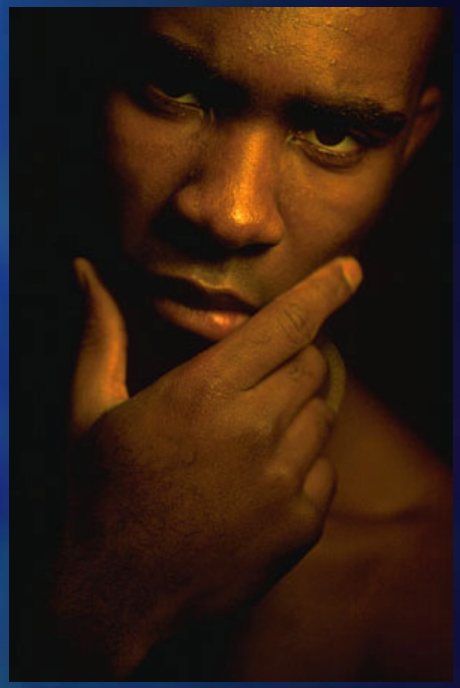
RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

are one of the biggest contributors to HHW

- Breakup of romantic relationship
- Constant Marital Problems
- Separation or Divorce

Warning Signs

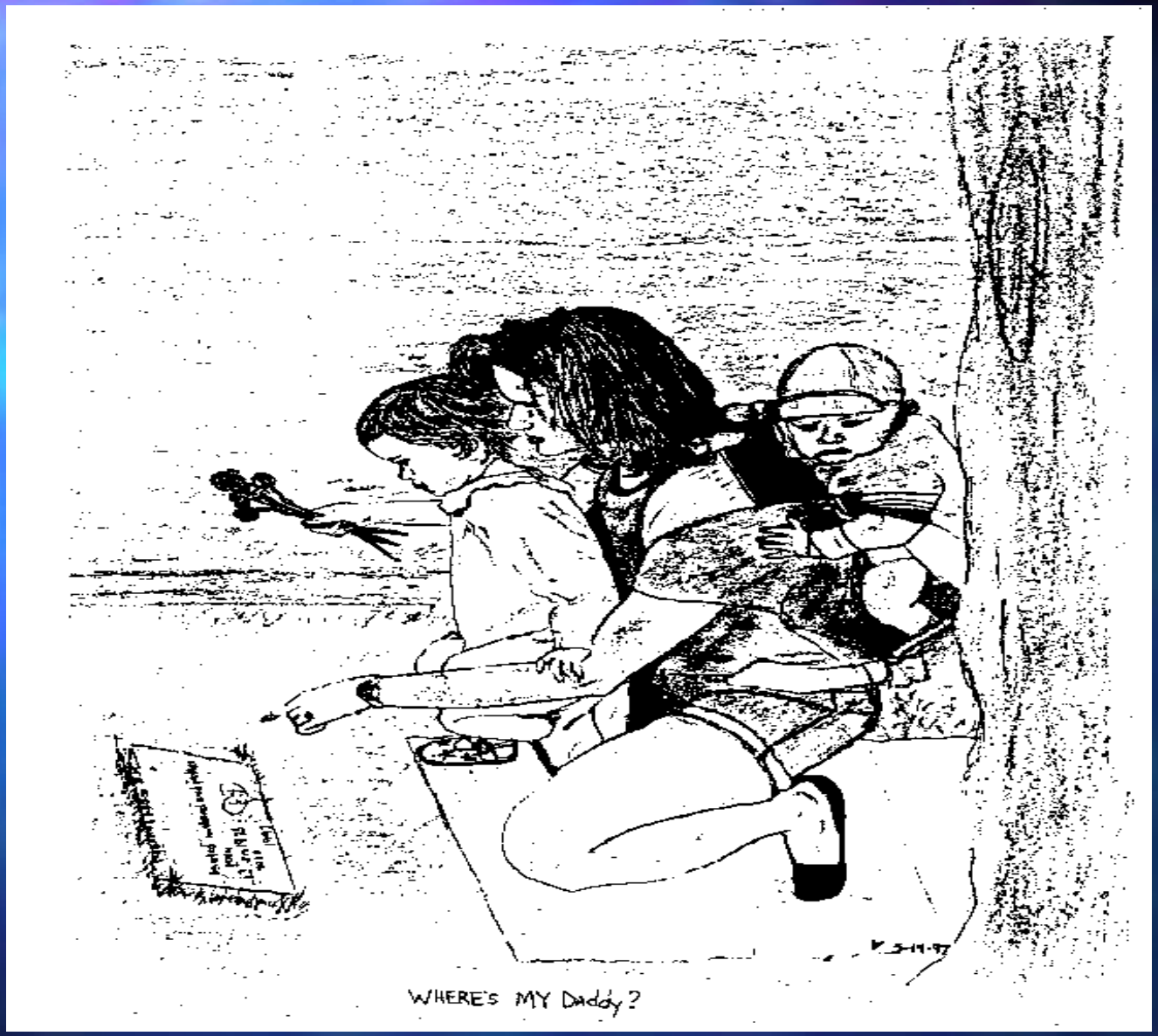
Will you be able to recognize a person who needs help?



Warning Signs

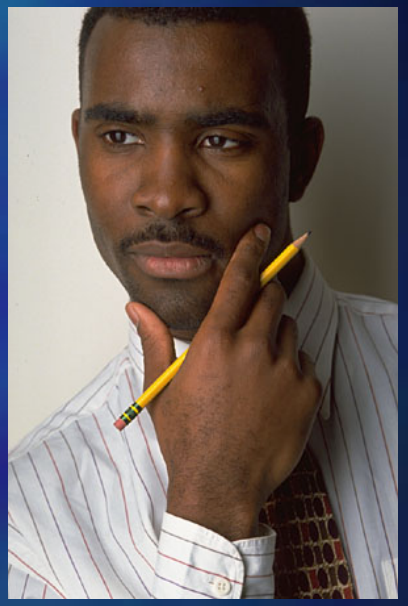
Take a look at the next slide. It's a drawing made by a soldier sometime before he committed suicide. In the picture you will notice that he drew his wife and children looking at his grave. He even placed his own name on the gave and <u>included the date of death.</u>

Sadly, even though the drawing seems like an obvious cry for help, both a friend and the soldier's wife did not catch the meaning.


WHERE'S MY Daddy?

BE ALERT FOR

CLUES



NEARLY 80% OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT OR COMMIT SUICIDE GIVE SIGNALS OF THEIR INTENTIONS.

VERBAL WARNINGS

- “I’m going to kill myself!”
- “I’d be better off dead.”
- “I just can’t go on any longer.”

VERBAL WARNINGS

- “You won’t be seeing me around anymore.”
- “I’m getting out, no matter what.”
- “I’m ‘going home’ real soon.”

BEHAVIORAL WARNINGS

- Organizing business or personal matters
  - Giving away possessions
  - Composing a suicide note
  - Buying a gun
  - Obsession with death
  - A sudden ‘lift’ in spirits
  - Planning one’s own funeral

Jokes about Suicide Should Be Taken Seriously

Remember

that behind every joke there is always a little truth. Besides,

who thinks suicide is funny?

Sound like anyone you know?

Look For Signs of

Depression

Signs of DEPression

- Withdrawal
- Overwhelming Sadness
- Lack of Energy
- Irritability
- Emotional Flatness or Emptiness

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

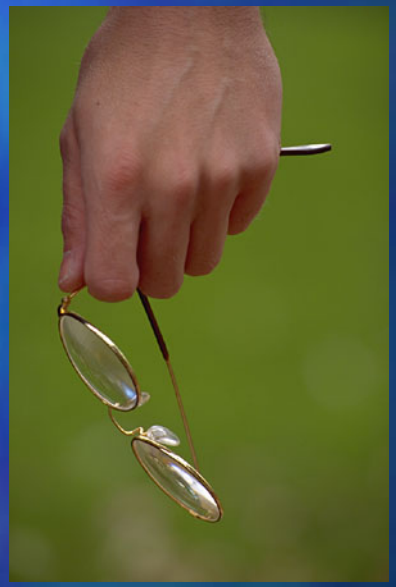
- Changes in Behavior and Attitude
- Different Feelings and Perceptions
- Physical Complaints

REMEMBER THAT PEOPLE ARE AT GREATER RISK IF THEY HAVE. . .

- Made a Previous Suicide Attempt
- Have A Family History of Suicide
- Lost a Friend Through Suicide

REMEMBER THAT PEOPLE ARE AT GREATER RISK IF THEY HAVE. . .

- Been Involved with Drugs or Alcohol
- Have A History of Alcoholism in the Family



The FACTS tell us to watch out for these signs & behaviors! Good leaders notice these changes and care enough to help others through the crisis.

The LESSON for all of us:

- Know your Soldiers.
- Know those you serve with in the workplace.
- Listen to what a person “doesn’t” say.

We can make a difference!!!

We can be a friend to a person in distress.

All of us must. . . .

- ✔ Take Threats Seriously
- ✔ Answer Cries for Help
- ✔ Confront the Problem

Here Are The First Steps To take

- ✔ Be direct.
- ✔ Ask them if they plan on killing themselves.
- ✔ Tell them that you care
- ✔ Get professional help

Evaluate the Crisis

- Does the person have a clear plan?
- Do they have the means to activate their plan?

When there is a specific plan and lethal means are available then the danger is immediate and

IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION

is called for!

DO NOT:

- Think that you must solve their problem.
- Leave them alone
- Assume they are “not the type”
- Keep the situation a secret

DO NOT

- Freak out.
- Argue or reason with them.
- Try to analyze them.
- Make them feel stupid.

INTERVENTION

- STAY WITH THEM
- NOTIFY CHAIN-OF-COMMAND
- GET PROFESSIONAL HELP
- ESCORT THE THEM TO PROFESSIONAL HELP

GET PROFESSIONAL HELP

- Crisis or Suicide Prevention Centers
- Physicians
- Chaplains or Local Clergy
- State and Local Mental Health Centers

GET PROFESSIONAL HELP

- Mental Health Professionals
- School Counselors
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Family Support Groups

A suicide impacts everyone

- The victim
- Family
- Friends
- Unit Morale
- Society

Suicide is not predestined
We can save a life if we have the courage to care.
Listen, reach out and help.
A human life can be saved through a human

QUESTIONS?

- Do you understand?
- Can you respond?
- Will we build strong teams?

Prepared for you
by the
I Corp Unit Ministry Team